Carolina Sport of Picking the Birds Off the Bushes in the Night-Time.

They pick robins off trees in North Carolina. A young insurance inspector who has just returned from the south brings with him the queer story of this new kind of sport, says the New York Sun:

"I was in Ramsur, N. C., near Charlotte, on the Ashbury & Aberdeen railway." said he, "when one evening a young fellow about my own age asked me to go with him for a robin hunt.

"That doesn't sound very exciting." I replied. 'How do you hunt them?'

"'Why, you take a hack and a jug of corn whisky, and drive a little way out into the country and pick them off the trees.'

"'Back up, old man,' I said; "you must be thinking of swallows."

"He insisted that he was serious, and the upshot of it was that I found myself in a rickety back with the inevitable demijohn of corn whisky, and, sure enough, the fellow had some bags, to carry away the robins, and a couple of torches. Two or three other similarly laden conveyances were following us.

"We got out in a little dip in the land. and the torches were lighted. And there on the bushes were hundreds of robins which had just migrated from the north and were resting in the warm shelter of the dip in the land. Those of them that were awakened by the glare of the torches blinked sleepily and chirped impatiently at the interruption of their

"The whole party fell to and actually picked them off the bushes with their hands and filled their bags as fast as they could. Talk about getting a bag of game! The fellows would gather 20 or 30, and then punctuate the performance with a swig of corn whisky, which is the rawest, hottest stuff I ever tasted in my life.

"This continued until the booze began to get in its effects, and then a fellow fell down with a crash in the thickest part of the bushes. The whole flock rose with a sudden whirr and disappeared into the darkness. We had been moving softly hitherto, although some of the robins out of reach on the higher branches had been knocked down with sticks.

"That's about all there is to the story except that it is the funiest sensation I ever felt to wake up in the morning with my head on a bag of live robins."

"A BUM BY ABSORPTION."

Col. Knight Relates an Experience with an Uncorked Bottle of Brandy.

"I was tipsy just once in my life," said Col. Knight, according to the New York Sun. "I was going through to the Pacific coast, and during a short wait in Chicago I ran to a near-by saloon and asked for a bottle of brandy.

"Before I could stop him, the bartender ran a big corkscrew into the cork. and I said to him: "Don't you do that

the only man in the country who has & corkscrew?" "So he wrapped the bottle up quick

and passed it over and I ran for the train. My berth was made up and I thrust the bottle in the rack overhead without sampling it. Then I turned in

a feeling that I was one of an all night party that had tarried with the juice at the expense of sleep. First I wondered where I had been, and then where was at the moment. Then I realized that I was on the train and wondered if I could get out of the bunk

"My head felt like a sheet lead hive with the bees getting ready to swarm. I sushed the button and when the porter came I asked him:

"'Where did I get this?'

"Dunno, boss, but you do look bad. "'Did I walk in my sleep?'

"'No, sir, not so I'd notice it."

"Well, assist me out if you think my head will go through the passage to the lavatory,' I said, and while I was washing up he began to arrange the section for the day.

"When I got back to where he was working he said, with a grin of great

"T'se got the clew to the extraneous atuation, boss. Here it is,' and he held up a half bottle of brandy and said: 'I guess you didn't have to walk fur.' "But the cork has not been pulled!"

I remarked, and the coon's face took on a look of amazement; but I readily understood what had happened.

"The brandy had been leaking through the perforated cork, drop by drop, upon my head and face all night long and I had accumulated a regular bum by absorption. The only Latin maxim I could think of to express my sentiments just then was 'Similia similibus curantur."

### Music as a Profession.

Unless a man is rich he ought to be regarded as a criminal if he permits his sons and daughters to become musicians. In the musical profession there are a few prizes not of the largest, but for the largest number of interpretative artists the life is one of drudgerythe drudgery of learning, the drudgery of pushing one's self into notice, and after all the continual drudgery of playing or singing just the music the public wants. I recommend no one to enter such a profession unless he or she loves music to such a degree that the drudgery is a pleasure.-John T. Runelman, in Saturday Review.

Cause and Effect.

The conversation was fragmentary. Under the circumstances it couldn't well be otherwise.

She the wife had asked for money. He-the husband-was broke. And she was giving him a piece of her and.—Chicago Daily News.

Junk Crawled Through.

The medium-sized northern Chinese junks make first-class blockade runners. They are built very low in the water, with the decks almost awash when loaded, so that only the bow and stern rise noticeably above the water line. They are strong, flat-bottomed, and of unpainted, dirty wood, with no bright colors about them. Propelled by from 10 to 20 oarsmen, if the sails fail, they glide through the water with no noise or smoke, and are very difficult of detection. Dodging along the shore and among the numerous islets which extend from the Shantung peninsula across the mouth of Pechilf gulf, they closely resemble the low, brown rocks. and during the last months hundreds of them have evaded the Japanese watches and carried tons of fresh provisions and vegetables to the beleaguered Port Arthur garrison.-London Times.

An Oak Tree Mine.

A Russian timber dealer has discovered a valuable mine of oak. It exists in a river of South Russia, in layers three or four feet deep, scattered over 150 square miles, and its most striking feature is its variety of colors, supposed to be due to the variegated soil of the river bottom. Not fewer than 12 shades of pink, blue, yellow and brown have been noted, each log having its own uniform shade. The logs taken out have ranged from 40 to 200 feet in length and from 15 to 20 inches in diameter, and it is estimated that more than 150,000. averaging 70 feet, remain.-N. Y. Herald.

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SAMPLE COPY.

AIRSHIP PROVING GROUND. Preparations for New Branch of Army Service Located in the Northwest.

Omaha barracks, near Omaha, Neb., is to be converted into the aeronautic proving ground of the army. A modern war balloon train will be instailed there by Gen. A. W. Greely, chief signal officer. Experiments with air ships and dirigible balloons will be undertaken at the new post, reports the Brooklyn Eagle. A permanent plant for making and compressing hydrogen gas will be an interesting adjunct. During the last few years the signal corps has been unable to do any balloon work, partly because of impossibility to obtain this gas in America. Repeated application to scores of manufacturers who formerly furnished it as a by-product have been futile, although compressed hydrogen gas is absolutely necessary for rapid and successful aeronautical work with war balloons.

An automobile will be a part of the new balloon train, if experiments now progressing under Gen. Greely's direction are brought to a successful issue. While automobiles seem to be unsuited for general army transportation in the field. the recent tests by the signal corps have demonstrated the practicability and advisability of adopting self-propelled vehicles for special military purposes-not only in balloons, but telegraph trains, Recent experiments in foreign armies confirm the results.

All great nations have equipped their armies with captive balloon trains. The individual processes of manipulating these are strictly guarded as military secrets. Of course, ability to discover the movements and position of the enemy is an absolute necessity of modern war. This can be accurately accomplished by an operator in a balloon 2,500 or 3,000 feet above the earth. He can scan the country round with a good telescope and telephone at once to his army whatever he may see. The value of this observation work has been proved already in the Russo-Japanese war. Experiments during that conflict in the use of cameras in war balloons for the purpose of furnishing views of the enemy's camps and fortifications have not been so successful. At the height at which such pictures have had to be made it has proved difficult to distinguish Russians from Japanese.

WHERE CIGARS ARE MADE.

Pennsylvania Leads—Twice as Many Rolled in New Jersey as in Florida.

For many years the competition between imported Havana cigars and hand made Key West cigars has been going on actively, with a general belief probably that Key West was an important source of supply of cigars, says the New York Sun.

Uncle Sam, who is a lynx-eyed collector of revenue from cigar factories, takes account in a year of 70,000.000,000 cigars, that being the number of domestic cigars moked in a year. The number imported from Cuba, the Philippines and other places of supply is relatively insignificant.

Of this total the number of Key West cigars-including with Key West the whole state of Florida, of which Key West, through its proximity to Havana and its large number of Cuban cigar makers, is the chief producing point-is 250,000,000. In other words, one-twentyeighth of the total number of cigars made in the United States and smoked some sixteen page weekly issued by The here are Key West or Florida made and that number only.

The great cigar making state of the country, notwithstanding the ignoble repute in many quarters of Pittsburg stogies, is Pennsylvania, which manufactures in a year nearly 2.000,000,000 cigars. New York makes 1,500,000,000 in a year, and Ohio, never very far behind in profitable and productive enterprises, 750,000,000.

The other states of the country are practically trailers to these, with the exeption of Virginia, which manufactures in a year 500.000,000 cigars and is, in fact, the only one of the big tobacco producing tates which makes cigars in large numbers. About one-half of the product of Virginia factories is in the form of cheoots.

Kentucky, which furnishes an enornous amount of tobacco, makes few ciars, and New Jersey, which has no paricular reputation in the cigar line. nakes in a year nearly twice as many as Florida.

Expenses of Great Navies.

A report made recently by the Britsh board of trade on the naval expenditures of the leading powers for the latest available year presents ineresting figures. The report deals with the year ending March 31, 1903. From the exhibit it appears that the United Kingdom spends more on its navy than Russia, Germany and France spend on heir combined fleets. The British naval expenditure is more than double hat of the United States. Russia's naal expenditure for the year named was ive times as large as that of Japan. Russia spent less than six per cent. of ter revenues on her navy. Japan spent nine per cent of her revenues in this way. The country which now spends nost or its navy next to Great Britin is the United States. The British mercantile marine exceeds in tonnage hat of Russia, Germany, France, Italy, the United States and Japan put together. The mercantile marine tonnage of Great Britain reaches 10,268,604 tons. -Philadelphia Ledger.

Must Have Been "Maude." "Have any adventures on your trip?" "Yes. Between here and Akron our

rain struck a mule that had strayed on

to the right of way." "What happened to the mule?" "We used him to haul the wreckage off the track."-Cleveland Leader.

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NEGRO EXCELS IN SCIENCE

Trained by Noted Educator Colored Baltimorean Becomes Valuable Assistant.

John W. Widgeon, scientist, is probably the most interesting negro in Baltimore. He holds a position at the Maryland academy of sciences directly under the eye of Dr. Philip R. Uhler, which gives him a place of distinction among his race. He has accomplished, says a recent report, a wonderful amount of work of a scientific nature without any other training than that given him by Dr. Uhler, whose protoge he has been for many years, and he is engaged at present upon the arrangement of a collection of coral which he gathered last summer in and near Jamaica which is said to be the best in that part of the

Widgeon's life has been such an interesting one that at the suggestion of Dr. Uhler he has begun to write out the whole of it. He is the only negro in Maryland who has seriously attracted the attention of scientific men. and what he is doing now bids fair to make him even more widely known than

Widgeon was born of slave parents on the eastern shore of Virginia in 1850. After the civil war he went to Baltimore and got a position in the establishment of Kuhn & Cummings, photographers, where he learned a great deal about photography. Then he went to work for Sharp & Dohme, where he remained 16 years. During his connection with this firm he learned a lot of hemistry, for he was employed in the laboratory ten years. Dr. Uhler gave him a position as a helper on one of his scientific corps after he left the drug firm, and he showed such marked ability in this line of field work tha: it was not long before he was sent out on expeditions by himself to gather geological specimens for collections or for study in the laboratory. He has been engaged upon this sort of work for 18 rears, and in that time he has got together a valuable collection of fossils. rocks, minerals, Indian relics and birds and snakes, all of which are on exhibiion at the Maryland academy of sciences.

The coral collection is excellent. Widgeon made two trips to Jamaica to get it. He did all the work himself. He stripped and dived for the specimens he wanted, not bothering with the paraphernalia of regulation scientists and

Dr. Uhler say that he would not dispense with the services of his colored helper for those of a highly trained scientific man, because Widgeon, being a negro, can and is willing to do certain kinds of work which a white man would not do.

"His endurance and patience." continued Dr. Uhler, "are unlimited, it seems to me, and his Indian blood, of which he has considerable, his grandmother having been full-blooded, gives him the characteristic trait of wood and field craft. He is invaluable to me and the work he does is as complete and thorough as I could hardly get under other circumstances."

Residence, three blocks west of Opera SPEED OF A RATTLESNAKE.

There Are But Few Things Swifter in Motion Than Its Head in Action.

In this wide world there are several things that are swifter than a rattlesnake, but they can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand, writes A. W. Rolker, in Pearson's Magazine. One of these things is a bullet; whereby hangs the explanation why it is easy to shoot the head off a rattler, although a marksman finds it difficult to place a bullet along the fat, seven-foot line beween the neck of the reptile and the tip of its tail.

It has long been regarded as a curious coincidence that even the man not famed for accuracy has had no trouble in blowing the head off a diamond back. In the diamond back country only one explanation is offered for this-it is the snake and not the man that does the

At close quarters, the instant the muz zle of a six-shooter is thrust toward a rattlesnake, the infallible eye catches the range and in the fraction of a twinkle the deadly head has aligned itself. As the gun roars and darts its tongue of flame, the head of the creature is torn off clean as if severed with a knife and the viper lies writhing, emitting a defiant rattle even as its grim, relentless heart ceases its beat.

Ramie Fiber in Germany. I desire to call attention to the growng demand for ramie in the textile ndustries of this country. The long. strong and glossy fiber of this plant serves as an admirable substitute for flax, cotton or silk, and only its present scarcity and cost prevent a largely increased consumption. If, as was so long and earnestly insisted by the late Prof. Waterhouse, our southern states are specially adapted for the successful cultivation of this plant, it cannot be too strongly urged that experiments in cultivating it be more widely extended. The raw material will find as ready a market in Europe as would flax fiber.

HUGO MUENCH. Japan Was Loaded for Bear.

It was virtually admitted by the Russians months ago that they would not have treated Japan as they did in the negotiations preceding hostilities had they supposed she would fight. The lack of preparation proves that the Russian officials were bluffing. With an unbroken series of defeats in the far east, and strikes at home developing into a revolution, the regret of the Russian grand dukes that they did not know Japan to be loaded when they played with her can be imagined. -Philadelphia Record.

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Gouverneur, N. Y, Nov. 28, 1904. J. SCOTT, D. V. S.,

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